

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5601

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAO PAULO 2153

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, BR

SUBJECT: SECURITY SOURCE EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER LABOR DISCONTENT
AND QUESTIONS AIFLD PROGRAM IN BRAZIL

1. AN EDUCATION MINISTRY SOURCE TOLD CONGEN TODAY (SEPT. 27) THAT, AS PERCEIVED BY LOCAL SECURITY AUTHORITIES, THE PRINCIPAL FOCUS OF SECURITY CONCERN IN SAO PAULO HAD SHIFTED FROM THE UNIVERSITY/STUDENT SCENE TO THAT OF LABOR. THERE WAS GROWING DISCONTENT IN THE WORKING CLASS DISTRICTS WITH THE RISE IN THE COST OF LIVING AND THE DECLINE IN WORKERS' PURCHASING POWER WHICH THE LEFTISTS WERE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF FOR THEIR OWN POLITICAL PURPOSE. THE RECENT SLOW-DOWNS IN THE AUTO PLANTS IN SUPPORT OF DEMANDS FOR WAGE RELIEF HAD BEEN FOMENTED BY THE LEFTISTS. AS THERE WAS NO IMMEDIATE SOLUTION IN SIGHT FOR BRAZIL'S ECONOMIC WOES, OUR SOURCE THOUGHT THAT THE TRADE UNION SCENE WOULD CONSTITUTE A GROWING FOCUS OF CONCERN FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

2. OUR SOURCE ALSO EXPRESSED THE "PERSONAL OPINION" THAT BRAZIL, IN ITS PRESENT LEVEL OF INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT, WAS NOT PREPARED FOR THE ASSERTIVE TYPE OF TRADE UNION MOVEMENT THAT EXISTED IN THE UNITED STATES AND WHOSE PRINCIPLES WERE BEING TAUGHT TO BRAZILIAN TRADE UNION LEADERS IN BRAZIL. THE SOURCE
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DID NOT MENTION ICT PER SE, BUT HIS REFERENCE TO AMERICAN-
SPONSORED LABOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN BRAZIL LEFT NO DOUBT HE

WAS TALKING ABOUT THE AIFLD PROGRAM. WHILE THE SOURCE INSISTED THAT HE WAS GIVING HIS "PERSONAL OPINION," WE NOTE THAT HE MADE HIS COMMENTS SHORTLY AFTER ATTENDING THE WEEKLY MEETING CALLED AT SECOND ARMY HEADQUARTERS TO DISCUSS LOCAL SECURITY PROBLEMS. WE BELIEVE THAT THE STATEMENT CONCERNING A GENERAL PREOCCUPATION WITH LABOR PROBLEMS REFLECTED DISCUSSIONS AT THIS MORNING'S SECURITY MEETING AND IT IS ALSO VERY POSSIBLE THAT THE AIFLD LABOR TRAINING PROGRAM MAY HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED IN THIS CONTEXT AS WELL. AS YOU KNOW, AFL/CIO LATIN AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVE MC LELLAN, AIFLD/W DIRECTOR DOHERTY AND OTHER MEMBERS OF HIS ENTOURAGE PASSED THROUGH SAO PAULO YESTERDAY IN CONNECTION WITH THE ICT BOARD ELECTIONS (IN WHICH THE ENTIRE ICT SLATE WAS RE-ELECTED). OUR SECURITY SOURCE'S COMMENTS CONTRAST SHARPLY WITH THE OPTIMISM EXPRESSED TO CONGEN YESTERDAY BY DOHERTY AS TO SIGNS OF GREATER POLITICAL LIBERTY AND INCREASED PROSPECTS FOR AN EXPANDED AIFLD PROGRAM OVER HIS LAST VISIT TO BRAZIL.
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